

Camp it up!

Sign up for summer fun with fashion, comedy & more

By **STEFAN DOYNO** and **BARBARA HOFFMAN**

MANY kids in this city want more from day camp than color war. And they get it. Where better but here to learn about comedy, fashion, musical theater and art? Read on and sign up — these camps are filling up fast.

FASHION FORWARD

"We're going to teach the 101 of retail fashion, as opposed to photography and the catwalk," says Gordon Losey, whose Fashion CampNYC kicks off this summer.

Designed for budding designers — and retailers — ages 14 to 18, it offers a behind-the-scenes look at the road from concept to merchandising, complete with a stroll down Madison Avenue and breakfast with the vice presidents of Coach, Tommy Hilfiger and American Eagle.

"We won't just talk about fabrics for five days," Losey vows. "The campers who've already enrolled are getting to understand what the business really is, and the team behind it."

Aug. 13-17, \$1,095. 780 Third Ave., between



Sarah Settineri, 14, is sew happy to be going to Fashion Camp.

Angel Chavez

48th and 49th streets; (800) 451-8806, fashioncampnyc.com

IMPROV CITY

From Chicago's Second City troupe — launching pad of Bill Murray, Tina Fey and many others — comes this Summer Boot Camp for teens who want to write their own shtick. Morning improv classes consist of games and exercises aimed at getting kids to work as an ensemble; afternoon comedy-sketch classes teach structure and concepts.

Manhattan's David Bluvband, now 18, has two years of improv camp under his belt. "I love performing in front of an audience and making people laugh," he says. "Learning improv [there] built up my confidence, and I've made a lot of friends in the process."

"Parents say, 'I can't believe you got my kid to write during the summer,'" says Second City's Rob Chambers, though the result is more Belushi than Beowulf.

July 9-20, Aug. 6-17; \$475 and \$470 (for improv and sketch-writing, respectively; \$795 for both); 440 Studios, 440 Lafayette St. at Fourth Street; (312) 587-9098; secondcity.com.

ACT UP

TADA! Children's Theater not only presents musicals — it teaches them. A week of classes in singing, acting and dancing culminates in

Focus on photography at the Summer Art Colony (right) or try improv at Second City's camp for teens.



Friday "sharings" by campers who've written the script

themselves.

"It's all ensemble-based, there's no lead role," says Alyson Ahlberg of the summer programs, which are divided by age: first- to third-graders in one group, fourth- to eighth-graders in another. Novices are welcome.

"We get a lot of first-timers as well as kids who've had the lead in school shows and want to do this the rest of their lives," Ahlberg says. "Or they think they want to!"

Aug. 6-10, Aug. 13-17, Aug. 20-24, and Aug. 27-31; \$350 per week; 15 W. 28th St., between Fifth Avenue and Broadway; tadatheater.com; (212) 252-1619, ext. 18.

HELLO, DALI!

The word is out on the Children's Museum of the Arts

Potter, pots & pans

CHICKEN nuggets, expelliarmus! A one-day cooking class lets kids exchange wands for whisks to create food inspired by J.K. Rowling. Just in time for the final book in the series and the "Order of the Phoenix"

film, the Institute of Culinary Education offers "Harry Potter Kitchen Wizardry" (July 8, ages 11 to 14, \$100). Since Rowling didn't get explicit about edibles, chef instructor Loren Banco used a little creative license.

"Everybody has their own idea of what Butterbeer is, but this is my



Summer Art Colony: If you're into animation, Claymation or cartooning, you'd better get your dibs in by December.

Happily, there are some new courses this summer that sound promising and are still open, including one on surrealism (July 30 to Aug. 3), which touches on sculpture, collage and painting with shout-outs to Dali, Man Ray et al. Other classes focus on puppetry and photography, both digital and old-school. All-day camps are open to kids ages 6 to 12 of all skill levels and interests.

"I feel like we're teaching them, but we're also collaborating," says Joe Vena, who teaches several media-based classes. "Sometimes the kids are a little surprised by that."

A week of classes is \$550; two weeks are \$1,050; 182 Lafayette St., between Broome and Grand streets; cmny.org (212) 274-0986.